CHAPTER V THE EXPEDITION TO EGYPT*

French Policy Regarding Egypt — Bonaparte's Use of It — His Military Dispositions and Expectations — His "Complete Code of Politics" — The Alternatives He Saw —Friction Between Bonaparte and the Directory — The Fleet and the Army — The Departure.

TAKEN in its largest sense, the social life of the world has been due to the relations of commerce, thought, and religion between the Orient and the Occident. The short road from one to the other is by way of the Red Sea, the Isthmus, and the Mediterranean. The controlling site on that thoroughfare is Egypt. From the crusades onward the domination of the countries and lands in that great basin was the prize for which France and England were always contending. Pierre du Bois proposed the seizure of Egypt to Philip le Bel in the fourteenth century; Leibnitz sought to draw Louis XIV out of Germany by explaining to him the dazzling advantage of the same enterprise; d'Argen-son suggested the Suez Canal in 1738; and Choiseul kept alive the plan of occupying Egypt. The republic had inherited the notion of world conquest which had occupied both Philip le Bel and Louis XIV, although in another form. Bonaparte, in the double r&le of Ray-naPs disciple and supplanter of the Revolution, was full of the same idea. It was his early study of the "Philo-

1 Boulay de la Meurthe: Le et Souvenirs sur Pexp6dition DirectoireetFexp6ditiond'£gypte. d'^gypte. Otherwise as before. De Villiers du Terrage: Journal